

In the Claims

Claim 1 (Currently amended): An expression vector comprising a nucleic acid that encodes a an immunogenic peptide of 50 amino acids or less in length wherein said peptide comprises at least seven contiguous amino acids of an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of HBenv₂₄₈₋₂₅₇, HBenv₂₄₉₋₂₅₇, HBenv₂₄₉₋₂₅₈, HBenv₂₅₀₋₂₅₈, HBenv₂₅₁₋₂₅₉, and HBenv₂₅₁₋₂₆₀, and wherein said peptide, or a fragment thereof, binds to an appropriate HLA molecule to form a complex recognized by cytotoxic T cells which T cells recognize a native HBV antigen.

Claim 2 (Original): The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the peptide is 25 amino acids or less in length.

Claim 3 (Original): The expression vector of claim 2, wherein the peptide is 8, 9, 10, or 11 amino acids in length.

Claim 4 (Currently amended): The expression vector of claim 1, ~~furth~~er wherein the nucleic acid encodes the peptide and at least one additional immunogenic peptide.

Claim 5 (Original): The composition of claim 4, wherein the additional immunogenic peptide elicits a T-helper cell-mediated immune response.

Claim 6 (Original): The composition of claim 4, wherein the additional immunogenic peptide elicits a cytotoxic T lymphocyte response.

Claim 7 (Currently amendment): An expression vector comprising a nucleic acid that encodes ~~a~~ an immunogenic peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence that is HBenv₃₄₈₋₃₅₇.

Claim 8 (Currently amended): The expression vector of claim 7, wherein the nucleic acid

encodes the peptide and at least one additional immunogenic peptide.

Claim 9 (Original): The composition of claim 8, wherein the additional immunogenic peptide elicits a T-helper cell-mediated immune response.

Claim 10 (Original): The composition of claim 8, wherein the additional immunogenic peptide elicits a cytotoxic T lymphocyte response.

Claim 11 (Currently amended): A method of stimulating a cytotoxic T cell response, said method comprising administering an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid that encodes a peptide of 50 amino acids or less in length wherein said peptide comprises at least seven contiguous amino acids of an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of HBenv₂₄₈₋₂₅₇, HBenv₂₄₉₋₂₅₇, HBenv₂₄₉₋₂₅₈, HBenv₂₅₀₋₂₅₈, HBenv₂₅₁₋₂₅₉, and HBenv₂₅₁₋₂₆₀, and wherein said peptide, or a fragment thereof, binds to an appropriate HLA molecule to form a complex recognized by cytotoxic T cells which T cells recognize a native HBV antigen.

Claim 12 (Original): A method of stimulating a cytotoxic T cell response, said method comprising administering an expression vector comprising a nucleic acid that encodes a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence that is HBenv₃₄₈₋₃₅₇.